minimizing loss to farmers. The advisories cover a wide range of crops comprising cereals, pulses, oilseeds, cotton, jute and other crops like chilies, tomato, onion, potato etc. In the event of loss the farmers covered under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) will be compensated for failure of crops arising from natural calamities, pests and diseases. The scheme is available to all farmers—loanee and non-loanee irrespective of their size of holdings. Besides, under NAIS, small and marginal farmers are entitled to subsidy on the premium charged from them.

Reforms in HOPCOMS

2050. SHRI KB. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka Government has sent any proposal to sanction Rs. 120 Crores to streamline and to introduce reforms in Horticultural Producers' Co-operative Marketing Society (HOPCOMS) in Karnataka; and

(b) if so, what is the present status of the above proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The Government of Karnataka has submitted a project proposal to the Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development for Development of Horticultural Producers' Cooperative Marketing Society (HOPCOMS), Karnataka amounting to Rs. 100.41 crore.

(b) The proposal has been examined and returned back to the Government of Karnataka for revision as per the guidelines of Special Project of Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

FAO approach for reducing hunger

2051. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations has described the progress made for reducing hunger in the country, so far, as disappointing;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the climate change is increasing the number of hungry people by reducing the area of land available for farming in the country;

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(e) whether FAO has proposed us a four-pronged approach to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of reducing hunger by 2015; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by Government to implement this strategy?

THEE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. In its report, "State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2004" FAO has noted that the percentage of under-nourished in India, after declining from 25% to 21% between 1990-92, remained unchanged till 2002. FAO however, maintains that, at present, they are not in a position to indicate the causes for this phenomenon.

(c) and (d) There is no indication of reduction in area available for farming in the country.

(e) and (f) The strategy to usher in food security is well-known. The country with adequate food production, its comprehensive Public Distribution System, various initiatives for generating income for the poor and overall economic growth is adequately prepared to usher in food security for much larger members at an early date.

NAIS in Punjab

2052. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will **the** Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Agricultural Assistance Scheme is working satisfactorily in Punjab;

(b) the number of farmers, crops and agricultural land covered under the scheme in the State;

(c) the criteria followed to decide the rate of premium under the scheme, crop-wise; and